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Chief O/S
Info
DDP
Director
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20 June 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion at Operating Committee Meeting of 19 June 1958 Concerning Tracking Cameras for Soviet ICBM Committee

1. The Department of Commerce member recommended that the tracking cameras be approved for licensing to the Soviet ICBM Committee and that consideration of the telemetering receivers be deferred. In support of the licensing of the tracking cameras he stated that his department had information from various persons knowledgable in this field who advised that they could perceive no objection to this export. Upon request he read a letter from Dr. Harold Stewart of the Naval Research Laboratory which support the above conclusion. He also read a short statement which they attributed to the "intelligence community" which also support this conclusion. (He informed the committee that he was proscribed from revealing either the agency or person who had provided this statement and the chairman ruled that on this basis it could not be considered. I later determined informally that this statement was given to them by [redacted] of this Agency). The Department of Commerce member said that these cameras were excess production in connection with the production of these cameras for the US and were not in demand elsewhere.

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2. The chairman then requested the advice of the CIA member and I asked that the State member comment on the penultimate paragraph of OC Document No. 1435. The State member said that they had checked that morning with the Office of the Science Advisor, Department of State who confirmed that they could see no objection to permitting the export. I then informed the Committee that while the foregoing information may to some extent negate my statements, I had been informed that these cameras incorporated some technological information which, while not extractable, probably was not known to the USSR. I further stated that it was my understanding that this technology was in relation to the grinding of prisms and/or the arrangement of mirrors. I also suggested that this equipment might have military implications which it would appear advisable to check out.

3. The Defense Department member stated that his Department was deeply concerned with this proposed export and he read a letter from Dr. Carmichael, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute in which he stated that he was not in favor of the export of these cameras, which were developed in the Smithsonian Institute by a Dr. Whipple and a Dr. Reinman (?). Dr. Carmichael further stated that he would not approve this export (it was unclear to the committee what his authority over this export would be) unless he received letters from the Department of State and the Office of the President recommending this action. He also stated that Dr. Whipple concurred in his opinion. The Defense Department member said that in further conversation with Dr. Carmichael, Dr. Carmichael had said that these cameras were the instruments which had

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accurately predicted 2½ days in advance the time and point of fall of the Soviet Sputnik. The Defense member said that his department was making a further comprehensive review of the military implications of permitting this export.

4. There was a general discussion of the propaganda possibilities of this export, mention being made of the propaganda value of publicizing the export of this scientific equipment to the Bloc and conversely the propaganda value of retaining it and perhaps being in a position to uniquely predict future falls of satellites. It was also mentioned that providing the USSR with this equipment might result in the U. S. IGY Group obtaining more information from the Soviet on satellites as well as certain scientific equipment produced by the Soviet which our scientists were anxious to secure.

5. No member other than the Commerce (OES) member made a strong request for the approval of this export and the chairman directed that a Technical Task Group be activated on an urgent basis to study this matter further and report back to the committee.

6. Mr. Wells, Commerce, who will organize this Task Group telephoned me on 20 June 1958, and requested that we advise him as to our representation on this Group. He had been instructed to have the Group meet not later than Wednesday of next week and report its conclusions by 27 June 1958.

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